(c) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR):

New medicine for malaria

*253. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have invented a new medicine based on plants to prevent malaria;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have completed the trial process of the said medicine and by when this medicine would be available to the common man?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (c) The new medicine derived from traditional Chinese herbal preparation-Quinghaosu (Artemisinin, from the herb Artemisia annua and its derivatives-Artemther, Arteether and Artesunate) has been approved for use under the National Malaria Drug Policy of the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme.

Artemisinin derivatives are to be used to P.falciparum severe and complicated malaria cases and for Pf malaria cases not responding to conventional anti-malaria drugs i.e. chloroquine. The drug is available under the programme for treatment of P.falciparum malaria resistant to anti-malaria drug chloroquine.

Before introducing the drug in the programme, it has undergone clinical trials and has been approved by the Drug Controller General of India for use.

Disease Surveillance Labs

*254. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Centres for Disease Control, United States, will help India in setting up disease surveillance labs to track disease out-breaks in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the National Drug Authority is also going to be set up to regulate standards for the manufacture, supply, pricing, licensing and use of medicines in India;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what are the other agreements that India agreed to enter with CUS, United States, during his recent visit to that country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (e) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and the Department of Health and Human Services, United States of America, have signed a joint statement on 7th June, 2005, to expand Indo-US cooperation on emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and disease surveillance. The collaboration will focus on collaborative applied research relating to emerging infectious diseases, strengthening disease surveillance, prevention and control and effective outbreak investigation and response. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will be the lead agencies in United States. The National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Indian Council of Medical Research will be the lead agencies in India.

A proposal for setting up of an autonomous Central Drug Authority of India (CDAI) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is under active consideration of the Government. The proposed National Drug Authority will subsume the functions of the existing organization for drug regulation, i.e. the Central Drug Standards and Control Organization (CDSCO) as well as address new emerging fields pertaining to bio-technology products, medical devices, diagnostics, new drugs and clinical trials and pharmacovigilance. In addition, it is also proposed to entrust the Drug Authority to undertake the functions of grant of drug manufacturing licenses centrally in a phased manner. However, the Authority will not be entrusted with regulation of drug pricing which is a subject of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers and the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority. The Drug Authority will be financially autonomous with provision for it to retain fees realized by it on various counts.

Apart from the Joint Statement on Cooperation in emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and surveillance, no other agreements were entered into during the recent visit of the Minister for Health and Family Welfare to USA.

Institute for checking quality of wheat and rice

†*255. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Institute has been entrusted with the responsibility of testing the quality of wheat and rice lying in the stores of Food Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the name of the institute and the reasons for its selection; and

(c) the amount fixed for the institute for carrying on the responsibility and whether the above institute has been selected from a panel of institutes?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Shareholding pattern of VSP

*256. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the shareholding of Government in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant;

(b) the other investments or stakes in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant by Government;

(c) whether there is any proposal to transfer the stake of the Central Government to the State Government; and

(d) the details of the present value of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The shareholding of the Government in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is as under

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.